

The seventh meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1912 was held in its office in the Lemon Building, Washington, D. C., on Friday, May 10, 1912. The following members were present:

Mr. Hastings, the acting Chairman;

Mr. Olmsted;

Mr. French;

Mr. Gilbert;

also Colonel Spencer Cosby, the Secretary and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order by the acting Chairman at 9:40 a.m., and immediately proceeded to the business before it.

1. The minutes of the preceding meeting, held on March 22d and 23d, were presented and approved.
2. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the action of the Chairman in designating Mr. Thomas Hastings as acting Chairman in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman was ratified.
3. DEATH OF MR. MILLET: The Secretary officially communicated to the Commission the death of Mr. Francis D. Millet, who perished in the TITANIC disaster on April 15th, and read a letter from Mr. Burnham on the subject.

Colonel Cosby also presented a letter from Mr. Glenn Brown, Chairman of the Committee on Convention of the American Federation of Arts, in-

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Washington, D. C., on Friday, May 10, 1912. The following members

were present:

Mr. Hastings, the acting Chairman;

Mr. Claxton;

Mr. French;

Mr. Gilbert;

also Colonel Spenser Gossy, the Secretary

and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order by the acting Chairman at 9:40 a.m.,

and immediately proceeded to the business before it.

1. The minutes of the preceding meeting, held on March 22 and 23, were

presented and approved.

2. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the action of the Chairman in

designating Mr. Thomas Hastings as acting Chairman in the absence of the

Chairman and Vice-Chairman was ratified.

3. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY: The Secretary officially communicated to the

Commission the death of Mr. Francis D. Millet, who perished in the Titanic

disaster on April 15th, and read a letter from Mr. Edmund C. Stettin on the subject.

Colonel Gossy also presented a letter from Mr. Oscar Brown, Chairman

of the Committee on Conservation of the American Federation of Arts, in-

forming the Commission that a Memorial Meeting was to be held on the evening of May 10th at the New National Museum under the auspices of the Federation, of which Mr. Millet was Secretary, in appreciation of his services for the fine arts and to the public. The Commission resolved, as a mark of respect to his memory, to attend this meeting in a body, and adopted the following resolution to be read at that meeting:

Washington, D. C.,

May 10, 1912.

The Commission of Fine Arts place on record their sense of the irreparable loss sustained by reason of the death of Francis Davis Millet who perished in the Titanic disaster. On the organization of this Commission Mr. Millet was elected Vice-Chairman, and the exacting work which fell to him in that position was done by him cheerfully, faithfully, intelligently, and tactfully. Training in the various branches of art, wide knowledge, cultivated taste, and the power of expressing ideas clearly and forcibly, gave the highest value to his service on the Commission. At the same time his sympathy and kindly nature, his quickness to grasp and his readiness to consider points of view other than his own, made companionship with him a rare pleasure. While we deplore his loss as a fellow worker in a cause so deeply at heart, we are grateful that we have been permitted to enjoy his comradeship and to profit by his knowledge and experience. To his family we who have known him long and well express our sincere sympathy in their sorrow. His distinguished and varied achievements, his courage main-

During the Commission first Memorial Meeting was held on the evening of May 10th at the New National Museum under the auspices of the Federation, of which Mr. Elliot was Secretary, in appreciation of his services for the time and to the public. The Commission resolved, as a mark of respect to his memory, to attend this meeting in a body, and adopted the following resolution to be read at that meeting:

Washington, D. C.,
May 10, 1912.

The Commission of Nine Arts plans on record their sense of the irreparable loss sustained by reason of the death of Francis Davis Elliot who perished in the Titanic disaster. On the organization of this Commission Mr. Elliot was elected Vice-Chairman, and the exacting work which fell to him in that position was done by him cheerfully, faithfully, intelligently, and tactfully. Training in the various branches of art, wide knowledge, cultivated taste, and the power of expressing ideas clearly and forcibly, gave the highest value to his service on the Commission. At the same time his sympathetic and kindly nature, his eagerness to grasp and his readiness to consider points of view other than his own, made companionship with him a rare pleasure. While we deplore his loss as a fellow worker in a cause so deeply at heart, we are grateful that we have been permitted to enjoy his comradeship and to profit by his knowledge and experience. To his family we who have known him long and well express our sincere sympathy in their sorrow. His distinguished and varied achievements, his courage main-

tained throughout a life passed largely among perils, his reputation, and his broad human sympathies are a heritage beyond estimation.

Daniel H. Burnham, Chairman.

Frederick Law Olmsted.

Thomas Hastings.

Daniel C. French.

Cass Gilbert.

Charles Moore.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.

The Secretary was directed to notify the President officially of the death of Mr. Millet, and to send him a copy of the Resolution. (See Exhibit A.)

4. BUTT-MILLET MEMORIAL: Colonel Cosby explained informally the idea which he and Mr. Hilles, Secretary to the President, had in mind in suggesting the proposed memorial to Major Archibald W. Butt and Mr. Millet to be erected at some point on the public grounds in Washington to the south of the White House grounds. He stated that Mr. French and Mr. Hastings had consented to design the simple memorial proposed. All the members present expressed sympathy with the idea.

5. MODEL OF FIGURE FOR BARRY MONUMENT: The request of the Barry Statue Commission, that the Commission of Fine Arts give its opinion upon the half-sized model of the female figure to be placed on the front of the proposed Barry monument, was next considered. Photographs of two models were submitted, one design having the head of the figure banded with a laurel wreath, while the

lained throughout a life passed largely away from the public eye, and his broad human sympathies and a heritage beyond estimation.

Isabel H. Brewster, Chairman.

Frederick Law Olmsted.

Thomas Hastings.

Daniel G. French.

Case Gilbert.

Charles Moore.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.

The Secretary was directed to notify the President officially of the death of Mr. Miller, and to send him a copy of the Resolution. (See Exhibit A.)

4. WILLIAM MILLER MEMORIAL Colonel George explained informally the idea which he and Mr. Miller, Secretary to the President, had in mind in suggesting the proposed memorial to Major Archibald W. Miller and Mr. Miller to be erected at some point on the public grounds in Washington to the south of the White House grounds. He stated that Mr. French and Mr. Hastings had consented to design the single memorial proposed. All the members present expressed sympathy with the idea.

5. MONUMENT TO BIRTH OF THE PARTY SYSTEM: The request of the Party System Commission, that the Commission of Fine Arts give its opinion upon the half-sized model of the female figure to be placed in the front of the proposed Party monument, was next considered. Photographs of two models were submitted, one design having the head of the figure banded with a laurel wreath, while the

head in the other design was without this wreath. Upon the recommendation of Mr. French, who had viewed the models, the Commission approved the design showing the figure with the head without the wreath.

6. PASTORIUS MONUMENT AT GERMANTOWN, PA. The next matter considered was the request of the Secretary of War for the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts in regard to the models submitted in the competition for a monument to be erected at Germantown, Pennsylvania, in commemoration of the founding of the first German settlement in America.

Mr. French reported that he had made an examination of the models submitted in this competition at Philadelphia, but recommended that the Commission take no definite action until drawings, and, if possible, photographs of the models be submitted for the opinion of the architect members of the Commission. The Secretary was directed to request such drawings and photographs, and the acting Chairman appointed Mr. French and Mr. Gilbert to act as a committee with himself to consider all questions that may arise in regard to this monument.

7. DESIGNS FOR "MAINE" MEMORIAL. The request of the War Department of April 13th for the opinion of the Commission upon six designs submitted for the proposed setting of the mast of the former battleship MAINE, which is to be placed in Arlington Cemetery, received careful attention. The Commission, after an examination of the various designs, disapproved all of them, and recommended that, in view of the difficult nature of the problem, the War Department employ an architect of recognized experience and reputation in monumental work to prepare suitable designs. (See Exhibit B).

head in the other design was without this wreath. Upon the recommendation of Mr. French, who had viewed the models, the Commission approved the design showing the figure with the head without the wreath.

6. PASTORAL MEMORIAL AT COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION, 1904. The next matter considered was the

request of the Secretary of War for the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts in regard to the models submitted in the competition for a monument to be erected at Germantown, Pennsylvania, in commemoration of the founding of the first German settlement in America.

Mr. French reported that he had made an examination of the models submitted in this competition at Philadelphia, and recommended that the Commission take no definite action until January, 1905, at which time the photographs of the models be submitted for the opinion of the architect members of the Commission. The Secretary was directed to request such drawings and photographs, and the acting Chairman appointed Mr. French and Mr. Smith to act as a committee with himself to consider all questions that may arise in regard to this monument.

7. DESIGN FOR PASTORAL MEMORIAL. The request of the War Department of April 1904 for the opinion of the Commission upon six designs submitted for the proposed setting of the east of the former battlefield, which is to be placed in Arlington Cemetery, received careful attention. The Commission, after an examination of the various designs, disapproved all of them, and recommended that, in view of the difficult nature of the problem, the War Department employ an architect of recognized experience and reputation in monumental work to prepare suitable designs. (See Exhibit 7).

8. ANACOSTIA FLATS PROJECT. The Secretary placed before the Commission a plan for the reclamation and development of the Anacostia River and Flats which had been prepared under the direction of the Board of Engineer Officers provided for by the law; this plan showed modifications suggested by members of the Commission on plans previously submitted. The plan was approved, subject to any further modifications proposed by Mr. Olmsted, who was directed to prepare the report of the Commission on the project. This report was later transmitted to the Board of Engineer Officers. (See Exhibit C.)

9. Q STREET BRIDGE. The request of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia that the Commission pass upon the design of the new bridge to be constructed across Rock Creek at Q street, northwest, was next considered. The Commission approved the general scheme, but recommended that the cornice over the main arches of the bridge, which supports the sidewalk, be diminished in size as it is out of scale with the rest of the bridge and with the buffaloes at the entrance to the bridge. (See Exhibit D.)

10. GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL BUILDING. Colonel Cosby brought up the matter of the requested report of the Commission to the Senate Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds on the Senate Bill providing a site for the erection of a building to be known as the George Washington Memorial Building. This matter had been considered at the last meeting of the Commission, the preparation of the report being assigned to Mr. Moore. Colonel Cosby stated that, as the Committee of the Senate had requested information on the bill before Mr. Moore's report could be prepared, he had transmitted a copy of a telegram from Mr. Moore on the subject which stated that, if Congress shall see fit to allow any building not under the control of the Government to occu-

8. ANACOSTIA RIVER PROJECT. The Secretary placed before the Commission a

plan for the reclamation and development of the Anacostia River and State which had been prepared under the direction of the Board of Engineer Officers provided for by the law; this plan showed modifications suggested by members of the Commission on plans previously submitted. The plan was approved, subject to any further modifications proposed by Mr. Crampton, who was directed to prepare the report of the Commission on the project. This report was later transmitted to the Board of Engineer Officers. (See Exhibit C.)

9. A RIVER BRIDGE. The request of the Commissioners of the District of

Columbia that the Commission pass upon the design of the new bridge to be constructed across Rock Creek at a street, northwest, was next considered. The Commission approved the general scheme, but recommended that the design of the main arches of the bridge, which supports the sidewalk, be submitted in advance as it is out of scale with the rest of the bridge and with the buildings at the entrance to the bridge. (See Exhibit D.)

10. GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL BUILDING. Colonel Geary brought up the

matter of the requested report of the Commission to the Senate Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds on the Senate bill providing a site for the erection of a building to be known as the George Washington Memorial Building. This matter had been considered at the last meeting of the Commission, the proposition of the report being assigned to Mr. Moore. Colonel Geary stated that, as the Committee of the Senate had requested information on the bill before Mr. Moore's report could be prepared, he had transmitted a copy of a telegram from Mr. Moore on the subject which stated that, if Congress shall see fit to allow any building not under the control of the Government to occur

py space on the Mall, the architecture of the George Washington Memorial Building can be made to conform to the general designs suited to buildings for such a location.

After some discussion, the ^{Commission} decided there was nothing more to be done in the matter for the present.

11. ARMORY FOR N. G. D. C. The Commission next considered the plans and design for the proposed Armory for the National Guard of the District of Columbia, by Messrs. Tracy, Swartwout and Litchfield, which the President, on January 16th, had requested the Commission to pass on. After inspection and discussion of the various features of the design, a report was drawn up and transmitted to the President. (See Exhibit E.)

12. PAINTING OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN BY MR. MURPHY. The Secretary read a letter from the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Library, requesting the opinion of the Commission on a portrait painting of Abraham Lincoln, by Mr. William D. Murphy, of New York City, the purchase of which is proposed in Senate Bill 5268. After an examination of the painting, the Commission adopted the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Commission is of the opinion that the portrait of Lincoln is not of sufficient value as a work of art to warrant its acquisition by the Government.

13. LETTER FROM MRS. J. B. HENDERSON: Colonel Cosby brought to the attention of the Commission a circular letter forwarded by Mrs. J. B. Henderson, of Washington, concerning a project for a "double line of bust statues (equal size) of all the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the United States, to border the sides of Sixteenth street.....", in regard to which she desired the recommendation of the Commission. The Secretary was directed to notify Mrs. Henderson to the effect that, under the law constituting it, the Commission can take no initiatory action in matters of this kind.

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14. LETTER IN RE SITE FOR NEW YORK CITY POST OFFICE: A letter from the Committee on Civic Improvement of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in regard to Senate Bill 4774, providing for the acquisition of land for a new site for the New York City Post Office, was also considered, but was merely transmitted to the Chairman of the Sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, which has the bill under advisement.

15. PROPOSED MONUMENT TO PRESIDENT BUCHANAN: Mr. Jawrason Riggs, of Baltimore, Maryland, one of the executors of the estate of Mrs. Harriet Lane Johnston, appeared before the Commission for the purpose of consulting them in regard to a proposed monument to President James Buchanan in the District of Columbia provided for in the will of Mrs. Johnston.

16. There being no further business to come before the meeting, the Commission adjourned at 2:15 p.m., to meet on June 21st next.

Approved

Thomas Hastings

Acting Chairman.

James Earl
Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary.

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Exhibit A.

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May 10, 1912.

The President,

The White House,

Mr. President:

By direction of the Commission of Fine Arts I have the honor to notify you of the death of Mr. Francis D. Millet, appointed by you a member of the Commission on June 15, 1910, and to transmit the inclosed copy of a resolution adopted at the meeting of the Commission held today. The Commission ventures to hope that an appointment will soon be made to fill the vacancy created by the death of Mr. Millet. In case you desire any suggestions from the Commission, the Commission will be very happy to respond.

Very respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary.

Exhibit B

13 indorsement
THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

WASHINGTON,
May 11, 1912.

1. Respectfully returned to the assistant Secretary of War.
2. The Commission of Fine Arts, at meeting held yesterday, examined the designs for the setting of the mast of the battleship "Maine", submitted with the preceding indorsement, and respectfully report that they disapprove of all the designs submitted. In view of the national interest in this memorial, and the unusual and peculiarly difficult nature of the problem of design which it presents, the Commission recommend that the War Department employ an architect of recognized experience and reputation in monumental work to prepare suitable designs. The Commission will be glad, if desired by the War Department to consult with the architect during the preparation of his plans and pass upon those finally submitted.
3. In regard to the request for a full expression of its views as to the proper artistic treatment of subject, while the Commission hesitated to offer any opinion or suggestion which might hamper the designer in approaching this difficult problem, they incline strongly to the feeling that it would be wiser not to attempt the incorporation of the mast as a part of a composite memorial structure but rather to treat it frankly as an isolated relic, complete in itself, a detached fragment of the wreck of the "Maine", supported in the simplest possible manner and accompanied by some dignified and beautiful separate means of marking its memorial character.

By direction of the Commission,

SPENCER COSBY

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary.

May 18, 1912.

Lieut. Colonel W. C. Langfitt,
Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army,
Senior Member, Board of Engineer
Officers on the Reclamation and
Development of the Anacostia River and Flats,
Washington, D. C.

Colonel:

In advising with your Board, as requested in your letter of March 8, 1912, in regard to the plans for the reclamation and development of the Anacostia flats, The Commission of Fine Arts has confined its recommendations mainly to three matters; the location of the proposed dam, the alignment of the river walls below the dam, and the general location of the islands and other shore lines above the dam.

Of the two locations for the dam and accompanying highway which have been considered by your Board, the one on the line of Massachusetts Avenue was strongly recommended by this Commission in preference to the one on the line of D Street, for the following reasons:

Considered merely as highways, there can be no question as to the relative importance of the two lines. Massachusetts Avenue is one of the longest and widest throughfares in Washington. It is already laid out on the east side of the Anacostia, and needs only the filling of the gap caused by the river; whereas D Street is not only a less important

thoroughfares as far as it goes but has practically no continuation on the east side of the river. A bridge or causeway on the latter line would have to be provided with a wholly new approach on the east side, cutting through the blocks as now laid out, or else would turn abruptly into a series of comparatively narrow, short and unimportant streets. It may be that there will at some time be justification for a thoroughfare across the Anacostia on some line between Massachusetts Avenue and the Benning Road bridge, but it is clear that the Massachusetts Avenue line is needed more, is needed sooner, and will always be the more important even if both are constructed.

A street on either line, if constructed in connection with the proposed dam, would have to be provided with a series of culverts over the spillway, a drawbridge in connection with the lock, and bridges over the P. B. & W. and B. & C. railroads, together with the necessary approaches thereto in embankment. Without attempting to consider in detail the engineering differences between the two locations, it would appear that there is no decided preponderance for the D Street location on the score of economy in constructing the dam and highway; probably the reverse. In case only the construction necessary for reclaiming the flats were undertaken and the opening of the highway were postponed, the initial cost would be materially less on the Massachusetts Avenue line. Of course either street can be opened more economically as a causeway on top of the dam than as an independent construction.

But apart from the practical advantages of first opening the more important highway, the location of the dam on the line of Massachusetts Avenue is decidedly preferable on esthetic grounds.

Because of its importance as a thoroughfare the bridge or embankment by which Massachusetts Avenue crosses the Anacostia will afford a view point of exceptional value overlooking the valley no matter where the dam is placed. Fortunately the general direction of the view, right up the largest stretch of water in the proposed park and directly between the hills that flank the valley, is almost exactly normal to the line of the Avenue. Moreover, the limited distance between the high bank on the west and the railroad embankment will result in a higher and more commanding elevation for the roadway of Massachusetts Avenue than would be reasonable on the D Street line. Under the circumstances, if the dam should be placed on the D Street line there would be a long stretch of stone-walled tidal channel in the foreground of this view and the strong line of the dam, separating the two types of landscape, would cut diagonally across the view in a very unfortunate manner. From any point of view the division separating the broad lake landscape from that of the walled tidal channel would appear more natural, artistically stronger, and more in harmony with other topographical features of the valley, if placed at Massachusetts Avenue than anywhere north of that point, because the western shore there forms a promontory and at the same time the embankment of the railroad, advancing from the low eastern shore, constricts the breadth of the valley on the opposite side.

In regard to the shore lines above the dam the advice of this Commission, embodied on the plan, has related to securing agreeable vistas and to providing a large extent of continuously sheltered channels for canoeing in the lee

of the islands.

In regard to the sea walls our suggestions, also embodied in the plan, have related merely to details of alignment.

It is the opinion of the Commission of Fine Arts that the execution of the improvement as set forth by your Board, properly developed in detail, will give to Washington a park of exceptional beauty and value.

By direction of the Commission of Fine Arts:

Very respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary.



Exhibit D.

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May 13, 1912.

The Board of Commissioners
of the District of Columbia,
Washington, D. C.

Sirs:

The Commission of Fine Arts takes pleasure in approving the general scheme of the bridge to be constructed across Rock Creek at "Q" street, as shown on the sketches submitted with your letter of May 10th, but recommends the following modifications:

The Commission feels very strongly that the cornice over the main arches of the bridge is out of scale with the rest of the bridge, and also out of scale with the buffaloes at the entrance of the bridge, and would therefore recommend that this feature, the arched cornice supporting the sidewalk, be very considerably diminished in side. In order to do this the reveals of the main arches would have to be made deeper or the total width of the bridge reduced. It is not deemed necessary, or even desirable, that this arched cornice should be the width of the sidewalk over it.

By direction of the Commission:

Very respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY

Colonel, U. S. Army.

Secretary.



May 13, 1912.

The President,

The White House:

Mr. President:

In compliance with your request of January 16th, that the Commission of Fine Arts pass on the design for the proposed armory for the National Guard of the District of Columbia, the Commission has examined the design submitted and finds it to be one of dignity and distinct architectural merit, well adapted to a site on the north side of the Mall.

It should, however, be pointed out that, while the design is impressive and would no doubt make an imposing public monument, the Commission feels reluctant to give its unqualified approval for the following reasons:

The Commission does not see the propriety of building a Greek colonnade detached from the main wall of the building, when such a colonnade is not a necessary feature in the design for an Armory. Equal dignity could be secured in a design of the same general character by omitting the continuous portico without necessarily modifying the practical features of the plan. If the portico is omitted, and the columns are engaged on the wall or placed within the main line of the wall, a suitable setting could be obtained by a broad terrace in advance

of the building in the space now occupied by the portico. The adoption of this recommendation would effect a very great saving in the cost of the structure and would certainly not impair its practical efficiency.

It has come to the attention of the Commission that Congress has under consideration changing the site originally proposed for this building. It will be obvious that, should an entirely different site be chosen, the architects will be obliged to restudy the design in relation to that site.

The Commission, while not finally disapproving the design submitted, recommends its restudy and resubmission to the Commission.

By direction of the Commission:

Very respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY

Colonel, U. S. Army,

secretary.

